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and other relatives of their mothers as to their fathers. It was taken as a matter of course that a child had full rights in the village of his mother, and from her, as from her relatives, he likewise received various prerogatives. Thus each child was a member of a bilateral social group. From actual residence in his father's village he tended to be more intimately associated with him and his brothers than with his mother's relatives, but this did not prevent him from visiting at the home of the latter, where he was received as a member of that village. Through the bestowal of prerogatives by his mother and the members of her family, his relationship with them was further emphasized. Such a child was, in fact, a full member of two groups.

When the members of the second generation married and begot children, each of these could have been a member of four groups; that of his father's father, father's mother, mother's father, and mother's mother. The Bella Coola believe that there were approximately forty-five groups of first settlers, corresponding to the forty-five towns, and it is obvious that if the system of intermarriage had continued for a few generations, a man would have been a member of each of these first groups. They assume that their first ancestors came to this earth far more than a few generations ago, and yet at the present time no one claims to be a descendant of more than eight of these first groups, and most claim descent from only two or three. In part this can be explained by forgetfulness, though a Bella Coola would regard this statement as heresy. The residence of a man in the village of his father has tended to emphasize relationship with the ancestral group that first populated that village, and there is no doubt that actual relationship, through the mother, with the members of other groups must in many cases have been forgotten in the course of generations. The term *ancestral family*, *mamamis*, is used in this monograph to designate those individuals who believe themselves to be descended from one of the first groups that populated this earth.

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614 553 [773] *The ancestral family may, therefore, be defined as those whose distinct names are embodied in the same origin myth.*

What is the stability of this group?

In consequence of the large number of names theoretically embodied in every myth, and of the necessity for validating the bestowal of any one of these by means of presents, it follows that there is always a large number of dormant names. The Bella Coola describe these as being, "In the burial ground." They are, in fact, dead. Any one of these may be resurrected by any member of the ancestral family. If a woman marries into a foreign tribe her relatives occasionally give her husband, outright, an ancestral name. In such a case that name is permanently alienated from the family to which it formerly belonged; this should happen only when the group is reduced to a few individuals, all of whom agree to the transaction. [583] But more often a woman takes as a wedding gift to her husband a name which it is understood cannot be transmitted to one of his relatives unless he has children. On the death of the childless husband, this designation reverts to his widow's ancestral family. If there are children, they cement the bond of friendship between the two families. The brother of a woman so married also bestows names on her children, as further mark of their incorporation into her ancestral family. [573] It is customary and proper, however, for the ancestral family into which a woman is married and bears children to reciprocate the compliment a few generations later, and by the marriage of one of their women to restore such names to the ancestral family to which they originally belonged. According to the Bella Coola, this practice of "return-marriage" has been the rule since the first exogamic marriages of the first people, with the result that names usually return to the patrilineal descendants of the first people to use them.

611 614 If a woman marries outside her ancestral family, her children will belong to at least two distinct ancestral groups. It is difficult to say how long an individual remembers the dif-

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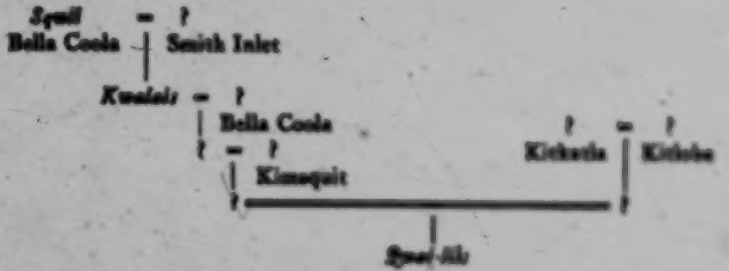
ferent units with which he is connected, but the following is an instance of survival for several generations. *Qnai-lils* is an orphan about ten years of age, now living in Bella Coola; he is looked upon with considerable respect as being a member of ancestral families in Bella Coola, Kimsquit, Smith Inlet, Kitkatla, and Kitlobe. His pedigree, given below, explains his powers. The symbol = marks a marriage, and the male is shown on the left in each case.



Theoretically, *Qnai-lils* is as much a native of Smith Inlet as he is of Bella Coola where his father made his home. If he should visit Smith Inlet and make known his pedigree, he would be received by the members of the ancestral family of his great-great-grandmother.[4] His welcome would be more assured if he were the owner of a name from their origin myth. Difficulties of communication and frequent wars made it virtually impossible in the old days to keep in touch with relatives in distant tribes, except in the case of a mighty chief who was able to invite visitors from great distances to feasts. Thus names taken by women to foreign husbands were virtually lost to the members of her ancestral family. In the course of a few generations, such designations carried afield would be revived as if dormant by some member of the family, and all recollection of the foreign marriage forgotten.

[4] As the Bella Coola are now living in a single village, it was impossible to obtain a modern instance of the ownership by one individual of rights in a number of localities within the tribal area. It appears certain, however, that the sentiments expressed with regard to *Qnai-lils* at Smith Inlet are identical with those formerly held for possessions in ancestral families located in different Bella Coola villages.

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The converse of this process of loss is the assimilation to an origin myth of names originally brought into the ancestral family by a woman from abroad. Unless intercourse and friendly relations were maintained by "return marriages," in a few generations no tradition would be remembered to account for the name, and this, if used at all, would be interwoven into the well-known ancestral myth. Hence a myth is not static with regard to the names embodied in it. These change from generation to generation; it is probable that elements of the story itself suffer like additions and alterations, even though the people do not consider this to be the case.

The Bella Coola regard the ancestral family as a social unit, not only in terms of the present, but as stretching back to the first settlement of the earth. Viewed from this angle, it is in fact, though not admitted to be so by the Bella Coola, a unilateral grouping with patrilineal descent, which may, in both the most recent and most ancient generations, be marked by matrilineal descent instead. A man frequently uses prerogatives obtained through his mother, her mother, or even her mother's mother, but it is tacitly assumed that for many previous generations such rights passed in the patrilineal line. Sometimes this succession extended back to the beginning of time; in other cases, prerogatives were transmitted matrilineally for a considerable period after the settlement of the earth, before gradually becoming patrilineal.

It has been thus far assumed that the only prerogative wrapped up in an ancestral name is a knowledge of the myth in which it is embodied. But there are others. For example, several of the first inhabitants of the world are said to have owned totem-poles, each of which was displayed by its owner at the gathering when he took for himself a name. Thenceforth, the only person entitled to use that particular totem-pole design was the person with the legal right to the name in question. The same principle governs all dance names; each entitles its owner to perform a certain ceremonial. This it is possible to enlarge the previous definition by saying that: